Pteraspis

Pteraspis (meaning "wing shield") is an extinct genus of pteraspidid heterostracan agnathan vertebrate that lived in the Pragian epoch of the Devonian period in what is now Britain and Belgium.

Description

Fossil of *P. rostrata*

Reconstruction of Pteraspis, Estonian Museum of Natural History

Like other heterostracan fishes, *Pteraspis* had a protective armored plating covering the front of its body. Though lacking fins other than its lobed tail, it is thought to have been a good swimmer thanks to stiff, wing-like protrusions derived from the armoured plates over its gills. This, along with the horn-like rostrum, made *Pteraspis* very streamlined in shape; a perfect quality for a good swimmer. *Pteraspis* also had some stiff spikes on its back, possibly an additional form of protection against predators. It is thought to have fed from shoals of plankton just under the ocean surface,[1] and is found in association with marine fossils.[2][3]

Pteraspis grew to a length of 20 centimeters (8 inches).

Pteraspis	
Temporal range: Pragian	
Pre€ € O S D C P T J K PgN	
Restoration of *P. rostrata*	
Scientific classification	
Kingdom:	Animalia
Phylum:	Chordata
Superclass:	Agnatha
Class:	†Pteraspidomorphi
Subclass:	†Heterostraci
Order:	†Pteraspidiformes
Family:	†Pteraspididae
Genus:	†*Pteraspis* Kner, 1847
Type species	
Cephalaspis rostrata Agassiz, 1835	
Species	
▪ *Pteraspis rostrata* (Agassiz, 1835) ▪ *Pteraspis dixoni* (White, 1938) ▪ *Pteraspis mitchelli* (Powrie, 1864)	

References

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2. Lankester, E. R. (1870). "I.—On a New Cephalaspis Discovered in America, etc" (https://zenodo.org/record/2016030). *Geological Magazine*. **7** (75): 397–399. doi:10.1017/S0016756800209485 (https://doi.org/10.1017%2FS0016756800209485).

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